



Adventure XXVII – The Hound of the Baskervilles

Publishing History

27 of the 60 stories

First published in *The Strand Magazine*, August, 1901 to

April, 1902

August - Chaps 1 & 2

September - Chaps 3 & 4

October - Chaps 5 & 6

November - Chaps 7 & 8

December - one sentence before end of Chap 9

January - Chaps 10 & 11

February - stop on 2nd page of Chap 13 “fixing the nets”

March - ¾ of way into Chap 14

April - Chaps 14 & 15 FINISHED

George Newness CO., London, 1902

McClure, Phillips, & CO., New York, 1902

British Illustrator – Sidney Paget

Chronology

Baring-Gould places the story at Tuesday, September 25 to Saturday,

October 20, 1888 making it 20th of the 60. This means that Holmes

was 34 and Watson 36.



Christopher Morley Says

“Probably the masterpiece. There are moments of anxiety and shock which no story in this vein has improved. From the moment when Holmes, looking at Mrs. Hudson’s well-polished silver coffeepot, sees the image of Watson studying the “Penang lawyer” (a walking stick) the reader is carried in an absorption we could not spoil by giving any hints. Holmes rarely laughed and when he did it so boded all for evildoers. Toward the end of the superb tale we hear his strident and dangerous mirth.”

Dummies Short Summary

“This supposedly posthumous story is the greatest of all Sherlock Holmes adventures. The Hound of the Baskervilles is a gothic masterpiece of suspense, atmosphere, and horror. Originally serialized in The Strand Magazine, it appeared in book form in 1902. It tells the tale of the Baskervilles, who live on the moor and are haunted by a spectral hound, “the hound from hell.” When the current resident of Baskerville Hall dies under mysterious circumstances, Watson is sent to protect the new heir from harm. With mysterious neighbors, an escaped convict on the loose, and a glowing hellhound, The Hound of the Baskervilles is named by fans as their favorite Holmes story of all.”

How Many Words

This is the longest story. At 59,452 words HOUN has the 60th most words (#1 is VEIL – 4,499, #56 if NAVL – 12,701)

Classifying This Case

This case is one of 23 classified as a MURDER and one of 14 where the perpetrator was either killed, arrested, or otherwise satisfactorily handled.

The Best Of Sherlock Holmes

The underwhelming low ratings for HOUN are due to the avoidance of Sherlockian societies to categorize the 4 long stories with the 56 short.

- 1927 – Arthur Conan Doyle did not list it among his 12 favorites.
- 1959 – The Baker Street Irregulars did not list it in their top 10.

What Else Happened That Year

- Mashonaland and Matabeleland declared British sphere of influence.
- British East Africa Company founded.
- Jack the Ripper has murder spree in Whitechapel.
- Miners Federation of Great Britain formed; demand for minimum wage.
- Foundation of Scottish Labour Party.
- English Priory of Knights Hospitalers authorized by Royal Charter.
- Foundation of London General Omnibus Company.
- French Indochina formed.
- Slavery ends in Brazil.
- Emperor Wilhelm I of Germany dies; Frederick III becomes Emperor from March to June, dies, and is succeeded by Wilhelm II.
- Benjamin Harrison elected President of United States; even though Cleveland received more popular votes, the electoral college gives the election to Harrison.
- New York State establishes electric chair for method of death penalty.
- Oscar Wilde publishes *The Happy Prince and Other Tales*.
- *Casey at the Bat* is recited publicly for the first time.
- John Phillip Sousa composes the military march *Semper Fidelis* for the U.S.
- Marine Corp.
- Tchaikovsky performs *Symphony No. 5* in E Minor at St. Petersburg.
- George Moore publishes *Confessions of a Young Man*.
- Stevenson publishes *The Black Arrow*, a novel about the War of the Roses.
- Kipling publishes *Soldiers Three, and Plain Tales from the Hills*; short stories of India.
- Dunlop's pneumatic tyre developed, principle still unproven.
- Clinton Merriam establishes the National Geographical Society and they release their first magazine.
- Drinking straws are invented.
- George Eastman perfects the "Kodak" box camera, which uses photographic paper roll-film.
- Fridtjof Nansen, Norwegian explorer, crosses the Greenland icefield.

- Nichola Tesla makes first AC motor.
- Incubators are first used for premature infants.
- William Burroughs patents the adding machine.

Holmes And Watson – Personal Information

Holmes and Watson, of course, are sharing space at 221B

DRAMATIS PERSONAE

By far the largest cast of characters in the canon.

- **Sir Hugo Baskerville**, former baronet who was a very evil blackguard and set the curse of the hound on his descendants.
- **Sir Charles Baskerville** became fabulously wealthy in the South African Gold fields and returned to England. He was restoring Baskerville Hall to its former grandeur at the time of his death.
- **Sir Henry Baskerville**, nephew of Charles by his younger brother (un-named)* who became baronet upon Charles' death. He was a Canadian farmer before receiving his inheritance.
- **Dr. James Mortimer**, friend and medical attendant to the late Sir Charles Baskerville.
- **Eliza & John Barrymore**, man and wife team who were Sir Charles only servants. The Barrymores had been in the service of the Baskervilles for 4 generations.
- **Murphy**, a Gipsy horse dealer who was on the moor at the time of Sir Charles' death.
- **Perkins**, groom at Baskerville Hall.
- **Mr. Frankland**, choleric resident of Lafter Hall.
- **Laura Lyons**, Frankland's daughter. Deserted by her husband.
- **Jack Stapleton** aka **Vandeleur** aka **Roger Baskerville, Jr.**, a naturalist.
- **Beryl Stapleton**, nee Garcia, of Costa Rica, beautiful wife of Jack, posing as his sister.
- **Roger Baskerville, Sr.**, youngest brother of Sir Charles. The black sheep of the family, he was the spitting image of Sir Hugo. ("A throwback") as was his son, Stapleton.
- **Wilson**, proprietor of a messenger service in London.
- **Cartwright**, an employee of Wilson whom Holmes hired temporarily to bring him food and messages while he was hiding on the moor.

- **Selden**, the Notting Hill murderer.
- **Ross & Mangles**, dog breeders in London who sold the young hound to Stapleton.
- **John Clayton**, a cabman.
- **Lestrade**

Quotable Sherlock

- "The world is full of obvious things which nobody by any chance ever observes."
- "It may be that you are not yourself luminous, but you are a conductor of light. Some people without possessing genius have a remarkable power of stimulating it."
- "Now is the dramatic moment of fate, Watson, when you hear a step upon the stair which is walking into your life, and you know not whether for good or ill."
- "There is nothing more stimulating than a case where everything goes against you."
- "The devil's agents may be of flesh and blood, may they not?"
- "The past and the present are within the field of my inquiry, but what a man may do in the future is a hard question to answer."
- "My eyes have been trained to examine faces and not their trimmings. It is the first quality of a criminal investigator that he should see through a disguise."
- "It is the scientific use of the imagination, but we always have some material basis on which to start our speculation."
- "Evil indeed is the man who has not one woman to mourn him."
- "I presume nothing."
- "Mr. Holmes, they were the footprints of a gigantic hound!"
- "We balance probabilities and choose the most likely. It is the scientific use of the imagination."
- "The more outré and grotesque an incident is the more carefully it deserves to be examined, and the very point which appears to complicate a case is, when duly considered and scientifically handled, the one which is most likely to elucidate it." "Watson, this time we have got a foeman who is worthy of our steel." Holmes to Sir Henry at the station: "Bear in mind, Sir Henry, one of the phrases in that queer old legend which Dr. Mortimer has read to us, and avoid the moor in those hours of darkness when the powers of evil are exalted."

Holmes' Fee

No mention but since he was hired by Dr. Mortimer acting on Sir Henry's behalf, the newly wealthy Sir Henry would, in all probability, paid Holmes appropriately.

Disguises

No disguises, a such, by Holmes but he did hide out on the Moor.

Unrecorded Cases

Several cases never put to paper in this story.

- The Affair of the Vatican Cameos
- The "little case" in which Holmes assisted Wilson and saved his good name, perhaps even his life
- Col. Upwood and the card scandal at the Nonpareil club
- Mme. Montpensier murder case
- Holmes is currently defending one of the most revered names in England from the clutches of a notorious blackmailer

Sherlock Holmes On The Big And The Little Screen

This is, by far, the story with the most representation on the screen. I have all but two.

- 1922 *The Hound of the Baskervilles* with Eille Norwood. The National Film and Television Archive at the BFI has viewing copies of this film but it has not been released
- 1932 *The Hound of the Baskervilles* with Robert Rendel
- 1937 *Der Hund von Baskerville* with Bruno Gutner (German)
- 1939 *The Hound of the Baskervilles* with Basil Rathbone
- 1959 *The Hound of the Baskervilles* with Peter Cushing
- 1968 *The Hound of the Baskervilles* with Peter Cushing (TV episode)
- 1972 *The Hound of the Baskervilles* with Stewart Grander (TV movie)
- 1978 *Sherlock Holmes: The Hound of the Baskervilles* with Peter Cook
- 1981 *The Hound of the Baskervilles* with Vasily Livanov (Russian TV episode)
- 1982 *The Hound of the Baskervilles* with Tom Baker (TV mini-series)
- 1983 *The Baskerville Curse* with Peter O'Toole (TV episode)(animated)

- 1983 *The Hound of the Baskervilles* with Ian Richardson (TV movie)
- 1983 *The Hound of the Baskervilles* with Wishbone (a dog) episode of TV series
- 1988 *The Hound of the Baskervilles* with Jeremy Brett (TV episode)
- 1999 *The Hound of the Baskervilles episode of Sherlock Holmes in the 22nd Century* (Animated TV series)
- 2000 *The Hound of the Baskervilles* with Matt Frewer
- 2003 *The Hound of the Baskervilles* with Richard Roxburgh
- 2005 *The Hound of the Baskervilles* with Anthony D. P. Mann
- 2012 *The Hound of the Baskerville* with Benedict Cumberbatch (TV episode)

Fainting In The Canon

Finally, a lot of fainting. Laura Lyons almost faints, but Beryl Stapleton definitely dose faint. Sir Henry, of course, does faint.

Annotated Sherlock

- **“a Penang lawyer”** A walking stick with a knobbed head, made from the stem of a small palm that grows in Penang, an island in the Straights of Malacca.
- **“dispnœa”** Labored breathing due to inadequate action of the heart and a consequent want of aeration of the blood.
- **“gig”** a light one-horse two-wheeled carriage.
- **“a farrier”** One who shoes horses. A blacksmith.
- **“a toff”** In old American slang, a dude; one who is stylishly dressed or who has a smart appearance.
- **“a wagonette with a pair of cobbs”** A four-wheeled carriage, open, or made with a removable cover, furnished with a seat or bench on each side facing inward and with one or two benches in front facing front. The two cobbs are short-legged, strong horses, usually reserved for heavy carriage work.

Holmes The Author

Just a single published monograph by Holmes mentioned.

- *Age of Documents* - Published

Weapons

- **Service Revolver** - Dr. Watson's and is mentioned in 13 cases. To fire at the Hound.
- **Revolver** - Sherlock Holmes' and is mentioned in 8 cases. To kill Baskerville's hound, firing 5 times into the creature's flank.
- **Rifles** - Of the two warders posted at the railway station at Fernworthy, on the lookout for the escaped murdered Seldon.
- **Rifle** - Of a mounted convict-guard, who was seen on the moor by Sir Henry Baskerville and friends on their way to Baskerville Hall.
- **Revolver** - Of Inspector Lestrade, which he said he always carried with him in his hip pocket whenever he wore his pants, which was hopefully most of the time, at least while on duty.
- **Pistol** - Which a burglar, presumably Stapleton, used to kill a page who had
- **Hunting Crop** - Which Sir Henry Baskerville armed himself with when he and Watson embarked on a search for Seldon, the Notting Hill Murdered, who was loose upon the moor.
- **Rock** - Which Seldon hurled at Watson and Baskerville when they discovered his hiding place.
- **Hands** - Especially nails, of Stapleton, which he used to punish his wife.
- **Pack of Hounds** - Kept by Sir Hugo Baskerville which he set on the track of the unfortunate maiden who was fleeing from his clutches.
- **Hound** - Of the Baskervilles, from the legend of the same name, which was sent by the infernal Powers to claim the soul of the debauched Sir Hugo, after he had surrendered his soul to them in payment for being allowed to capture the above-mentioned maiden.
- **Hound-Mastiff** - Kept by Stapleton, which with the help of a cunning preparation of phosphorous, made an altogether convincing double of the original hound. It had successfully killed off Sir Charles Baskerville, chased the criminal Seldon to his death by mistake, and nearly accomplished the murder of Sir Henry Baskerville, despite Holmes' precautions.

Frank Mentzel